

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PRAGUE 02686 160800Z

17
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

COME-00 EB-07 LAB-04 SIL-01 SAJ-01 AGR-05 AGRE-00

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P R 160715Z SEP 76
FM AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1060
INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
AMEMBASSY WARSAW
AMEMBASSY VIENNA

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE PRAGUE 2686

E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: PINT EAGR CZ
SUBJECT: MINISTERIAL CHANGES

REF PRAGUE 2682

1. CZECHOSLOVAK NEWS SERVICE (CTK) ANNOUNCED SEPT 15 THAT
FEDERAL DEPUTY PREMIERS FRANTISEK HAMOUZ AND JAN GREGOR
HAVE BEEN RELIEVED OF THEIR FUNCTIONS, AND THAT CZECHOSLOVAK
FEDERAL MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE BOHUSLAV VECERA HAS BEEN REPLACED
BY CZECH REPUBLIC MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE JOSEF NAGR. ALL WILL
BE RE-ASSIGNED, CTK SAID. CHANGES MADE SEPT 14, BUT ANNOUNCED
SEPT. 15.

2. GOVERNMENTAL RESHUFFLE APPEARS TO BE OUTGROWTH OF CENTRAL
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COMMITTEE PLENUM CONCLUDED SEPT 14, AT WHICH STRONG CRITICISM

LEVELED AT INDUSTRIAL SECTOR, ESPECIALLY METALLURGY AND ENGINEERING AND IT WAS ALSO NOTED THERE HAD BEEN "HARVEST SETBACKS" (REFTEL).

3. OUTGOING DEPUTY PREMIER HAMOUZ HAS SERVED AS CZECHOSLOVAK REPRESENTATIVE TO CEMA AND WAS MINISTER OF FOREIGN TRADE BRIEFLY IN 1969-70. HE IS BELIEVED TO HAVE HELD OVERALL FOREIGN TRADE RESPONSIBILITIES IN COUNCIL OF MINISTERS.

4. DEPUTY PREMIER GREGOR, A SLOVAK, HAS BACKGROUND IN TRADE AND LIGHT INDUSTRY AND PRESUMABLY SUPERVISED THESE AREAS. SEPT. 16 PRESS REPORTED HE HAS BEEN NAMED DEPUTY PREMIER OF SLOVAKIA.

5. REPLACEMENT OF AGRICULTURAL MINISTER VECERA BY CZECH AGRICULTURAL MINISTER NAGR COMES AT TIME WHEN LEADERSHIP HAS BEEN FACED WITH UNSATISFACTORY HARVESTS AND NEED TO IMPORT GRAIN, INCLUDING, AS SOME BELIEVE, FROM WEST (PRAGUE 2527). NAGR, 57 YEARS OLD, IS SEVEN YEARS VECERA'S SENIOR, AND A CZECH, AS IS VECERA.

6. COMMENT: OUR INITIAL ANALYSIS OF CHANGES IS THAT GOC IS MAKING TWO-PRONGED EFFORT, IF ONLY COSMETIC, TO UPGRADE EXPORT CAPABILITY AND IMPROVE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION, IN FACE OF WORSENING TRADE PROSPECTS AND EVER MORE OBVIOUS DOMESTIC SHORTAGES OF MEAT AND OTHER AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS.
BYRNE

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